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**Flames** 

Animals quarantined Ringtail Ranch and Rescue visitors bitten

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destroy car Teens late to prom due to car trouble

# **INPORTANEWS**

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### Creative spotlight





# **UPFRONT**

# A prom to remember as car ignites

They decided to take the back

roads to the Americana, where

that we were at a stop sign

when it happened. Because

if we were just driving who

knows, it could have just burst

They managed to exit the

"As we were kind of run-

vehicle before the flames got

ning away, as soon as we were

on the grass (across the road)

we started to hear popping.

The tires were bursting, the

glass was shattering, there was

glass everywhere afterwards."

into flames," Videcak said.

out of control

Fisher said

"It was also just so lucky

the prom was being held.

Postmedia Network What turned out to be more than a little car trouble left three girls stranded on their

way to prom.

Two Lakeshore Catholic High School students, along with a friend, were headed to their much anticipated party, when the car they were in began smoking. High school student Brandee Videcak, 18, had borrowed her sister's 1987 Grand Priv to drive fellow student Ashley Fisher, 17, and former Lakeshore Catholic student Kristian DeCicco. 18, to their prom in Niagara Falls two weekends ago.

While driving Videcak said the car stalled and smoke started to pour out from under the hood. When Videcak popped the hood to inves-

tigate she saw flames. \*I turned off the ignition and all of a sudden smoke just engulfed the whole hood, like what is happening? I heard the pop, I saw some flames and that's when I saw all the flames underneath the car and I'm watching the metal melt onto the road" Videcak hice

Videcak said they were lucky to have been on a street in Stevensville when it happened. Initially, the girls were going to take the highway, but had to make a pit stop at Videcak's house in Port Colborne.



Ashley Fisher, 17. Kristian DeCicco. 18, and Brandee Videcak, 18 experienced an unusual twist to their prom night when their car caught fire on the way to the dance.

Tammy Lane, owner of Lane's Family Restaurant in Stevensville, said a couple people at the restaurant had called 911. Tammy welcomed the

Department extinguished the flames. "I comforted them and they were very nice people." Lane

said of the girls and their parents who later joined them. When DeCicco realized she had left all her belongings in the vehicle, Lane offered to help. Lane gave DeCicco a purse and offered to give Videcak a pair of dress shoes, since she had left

her shoes in the car "You've got to be there for

each other," Lane said. DeCicco said Lane told her she deserved the purse more girls, offering them a place to wait while the Fort Erie Fire

than she did. "I cannot thank that diner enough for giving me that wallet," she said Fisher said it was "heart

stopping" to see the car after the fire was extinguished. Videcak's heart also "stopped" when she saw the aftermath. Videcak said if they had been in the car for a couple more seconds they could have been injured, and that was a scary

thought. People at the restaurant wanted to make sure the girls were able to get to prom and Fisher said they were offered



SUPPLIED BHOT

After a fire ignited, not much was left of the 1987 Grand Prix that Brandee Videcak was driving to her high school prom on Saturday night.

rides from lots of people, With the help of family they ended up making it to venue about an hour and a half after prom had started.

Despite the intense incident the girls managed to keep their sense of humour and calm. They laughed saying the first song that played after dinner was the song Fireball by Pitbull, Videcak said the second song that played was I Love It by Icona Pop.

"I crashed my car into a bridge, I watched it burn, and then we were like really," Videcak said about the lyrics

With a laugh DeCicco said some of the teachers joked that Fireball was their song. "This is so ironic because we are all here with our car burning, but we are at prom any ways, like having a good time." DeCicco said.

Videcak said the insurance ompany and scrap yard said due to the damage they wont know what caused the fire "It's so smoldered and

destroyed that we are never going to find out what kind of problem there was," Videcak All three said they will

never forget prom and it will be a story to tell their children one day

MAllenberg@postmedia.com



# **LOCALNEWS**

# **Schoolyard bat tests positive for rabies**

#### Postmedia Network

Ten kindergarten students at a Niagara Falls school have been urged to see doctors after they were in close proximity to a bat which tested positive for rabies.

Domenic Massi, principal of St. Gabriel Lalemant Catholic Elementary School on Vine Street, says a group of children were playing tag during their lunch break last Monday when they noticed the small bat clinging to a tree trunk, about two feet off the ground.

Agitated by the activity, the bat hissed. A teacher heard the sound and immediately evacuated the area

Massi was informed, and quickly called the Niagara Falls Humane Society to take it away for testing. He then notified the parents "to be on alert" they may have been sprayed.





Ten students at St. Gabriel Lalemant Catholic School in Niagara Falls came in close proximity last Monday to a bat which has tested positive for rabies

# Art draws crowd to Port Colborne

### Doctmadia Network

Artisan Mike Feagan doesn't believe the Port Colborne area is more artistic than any other community

What sets the northeast shore of Lake Erie apart, however, is its willingness to sing the praises of the talented groups and individuals who make up the local arts scene,

"I bet every community has the same percentage of

nity does something like this. It's a fantastic way to showcase the arts," the Sherkston woodworker said from his

booth at Art Crawl. One block of West Street and another along Clarence Street were closed to traffic last Saturday evening for the annual celebration of the arts. Co-organizers Jeff Ballin and Putzy Madronich expected 80 to 90 displays at the sixth adition of an event run in partnership with the Down-

town Port Colhorne Business

arts and culture and provide a spinoff for the businesses in the downtown," Ballin said.

Madronich said Port Colborne's arts community has grown since she came to the region 25 years ago.

It's becoming more vibrant. There is a good mix of everything," said the member of South Niagara Artists who creates collages uses mixed mediume

While Madronich maintained inspiration travels with my supplies," she said — Ballin allowed Port Colborne's geography could have some-

thing to do with that growth. "It's a scenic place," he said. "Everything on the water seems to sparkle a little brighter\*

It was Hannah Frandesen's first time with a display at Art Crawl and the budding makeup artist used the opportunity to see how her designs translate from paper to a "fully dimensional" canvas that is a client's face.

work with every dimension," the Grade 10 Welland Centennial Secondary School student said of the difference between working on paper and a person's face.

Frandesen feels comfortable doing makeup for proms, but she doesn't feel she's ready to offer her services for a wedding party. "You have to be more of a pro to do that. I'm still work-

ing on it." Dick and Lisa Passmore Operatic Society display promoting a production of My Fair Lady "I wish Dunnville will have something like this one day, said Lisa Passmore, who, like her husband, is in her third year with the community theatre troupe.

home in Dunnville to take

part in Art Crawl. They were

dressed in character, as Prof.

Henry Higgins and Lisa

Doolittle, as they greeted fes-

tivalgoers at a Port Colhorne

BFranke@postmedia.com



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POSTMEDIA

# Let's stand with local LGBT community



GRANT LAFLECHE

anada, it seems to me, is a nation we take for granted far too often. As citizens, we don't often recognize the stark advantage we have over most other denizens of this planet. We're oceans away from war zones and plagues, Whatever problems we find in our governments, they pale in comparison to the debilitating corruption found elsewhere.

And above all, we're relatively safe. Even compared to our American neighbours — the citizens of the most free, most

powerful democracy on Earth - we're safer. Yes, we've had to deal with domestic terrorism, like the 2014 shooting on Parliament Hill. However, and without minimizing

those incidents, the death toll can be counted on one band.

In America, you need a spread sheet to track the names of the dead Fifty more were added to those lists after the shooting at an Orlando, Fla. gay night-

club. It's a borrifying act that simply has no Canadian equivalent The shooting in Orlando was the result of a gurgling cauldron of America's gun control debate, a climate of religiously motivated

homophobia, iihadist radicalization and mental health issues.

Still, such a lethal attack on a gay community is felt far beyond Florida. It sent shock waves north of the 49th, and even Niagara's



In a show of sympathy and solidarity, Mohamad Al Jumaily stands at the corner of Geneva and

own LGBT community felt the tremors.

Enzo DeDivitiis, spokesman for Pride Niagara, said he felt "gutted" when he heard

"You realize how lucky we are to live in a place like Canada where that hasn't happened," DeDivitiis said last week. "But it is frightening, because you think 'It

could happen here." It could happen anywhere. One criminal. One gun. A crowded place.

That is all it takes. The Orlando shooting is a shocking and gruesome extreme, but DeDivitüs points

Scott streets in St. Catharines holding a message of peace. As he did after the Paris attacks, the young Muslim took to busy intersections around the city to spread the message of peace. out it took place in an environment where discrimination against the LGBT community

continues. There are hundreds of anti-gay bills being debated in state legislatures dominated by right-wing politicians. In Canada, where gay marriage has been legal for more than a decade, that sort of

political action is almost non-existent. Still, it took until last month for the federal Conservative Party to accept same-sex

And in 2015, a meeting of Niagara's own regional council was specifically about standing in unity with the local LGBT community.

forgotten for the purposes of sarcasm claimed on Twitter that being a Christian while supporting gay marriage is the product of a perverted mind.

\*The bigotry against gay people in Canada is just something that isn't on the front burner anymore. But it does exist," DeDivitiis

said. "The kind of prejudices that gay people have always faced are still there. The frustration and fear a quiet kind of bigotry creates, now amplified by mass murder, can result in a chill across gay communities,

he said. It may make some people unwilling to stand up and be counted as gay citizens; better to stay silent in a closet than risk being harmed by stepping out. DeDivitiis said he hopes the shooting will result in a more defiant reaction. It is more

important than ever for people to stand up in the light and be proud of who they are, he said.

He's right. And we as a community should stand with

We cannot cower before those who use the bludgeon in lieu of conservation, or attempt to turn their political office into a launching pad for bigotry. We ought to directly, and overtly, reject those who would harm or

belittle our brothers and sisters. Fortunately, Niagara had an opportunity to show its mettle last week.

Working with Mayor Walter Sendzik. Pride Niagara organized a vigil at St. Catharines city hall to give residents the opportunity to respect the fallen and show solidarity with

Niagara's gay community. We shouldn't let the opportunity pass us by,

glaffeche@postmedia.com

# America mourns, debatesand then does nothing

A nger and hate aren't conditions pecu-Jiar to America, but the instruments used to satisfy that emotion and state of mind are more available in the United States than in any other nation on Earth. Last week, one day after the worst mass

shooting in U.S. history, a columnist with a Philadelphia newspaper discovered it took her seven minutes to purchase the same weapon used in Orlando to mow down 49

people in a crowded nightclub. The columnist paid less than \$800 for an AR-15, a semi-automatic assault rifle that has become the weapon of choice for American mass killers. The AR-15 was used to kill 26

and wound two people at an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut in 2012; to kill 12 and wound 70 people at a movie theatre in Colorado in 2012: to kill 10 and wound nine people at a community college in Oregon in 2015; and to kill 14 and wound 22 people at an office Christmas party in San Bernardino, Calif. just six months ago.

In Orlando, the AR-15 proved to be just as deadly and efficient. Ironically, the same Philadelphia columnist reported that it took her longer

than seven minutes to turn in her recently purchased assault rifle to her local police denartment That's part of America's nightmare - the such destructive potential can be purchased . . . quickly, efficiently, almost effortlessly, by upright citizens or scheming wack-jobs. In the case of Orlando, the

shooter purchased his AR-15 and a handgun just a few weeks earlier, both from a licensed gun shop in Florida. He breezed through the background check because he had no criminal record. It would seem sensible to ban weapons

designed to kill dozens of people within a few minutes, but that's not easily done in the U.S. American gun owners are constitutionally protected, and although various state and city governments have legislated various impedigrown in recent years. Florida is lax in its gun laws, but mass shootings have also occurred in states where the laws are stricter. Indeed. according to the National Shooting Sports Foundation, there were between five and 8.5 million assault weapons in circulation in the U.S. in 2013.

Every time a mass shooting like Orlando's occurs, there is much hand-wringing and public discussion, but little changes. One would think the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre in 2012, killing 20 children ages six and seven, would have been America's so-called tipping point, but it wasn't. And, sadly, Orlando won't be either.

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# Firm has been chosen to find a new CAO for Niagara Region

Postmedia Network A recruitment firm has been chosen to find Niagara's next top humancrat. Following an in-camera meeting last Monday, the Region's chief administrative directed staff to "complete due diligence" on the selected firm. Once that's complete, the name of the firm will be publicly released

The new hire will replace

former CAO Harry Schlange, who left at the end of May for a CAO job with the City of Bramp-

Corporate services commissioner Mo Lewis is filling in as acting CAO until a permanent

Last month, regional staff contacted 13 firms requesting information on pricing, experi ence and qualifications regarding the hiring of a senior staff member Six responded, with varying levels of experience and differ-

replacement is found.

ing backgrounds, said Fiona Peacefull, the Region's director of people services and organization development, prior to detail

going into closed session to discuss confidential proposals in It was also announced the Region's manager of partnership development Erin O'Hoski has given her notice and is moving to another municipality She will be replaced on a temporary basis to allow the new CAO, who will work closely with the person in that position, to select a permanent replace-



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# LOCALNE



#### Port council praises students' skills

Deputy Mayor Bea Kenny and Port Colborne city council recognized Lakeshore Catholic High School students who participated in a national skills competition

Principal Glenn Gifford told those at last Monday night's council meeting students earned nine gold, five silver and three bronze medals at the regional level of the competition

Justin Schulz won gold in the regional and provincial qualifying rounds and took home a bronze from the national competition held in Moncton, N.B., for his work in carpentry. The Grade 12 student called the competition the "experience of a lifetime

Grade 10 student Stella Poirier earned a gold medal in baking at the regional level and came in sixth place

at nationals. She said she was happy to get to be

a part of the competition It's not normal that a Grade 10 wins gold in a competition. Students Jayne Inouye and Fran Spiteri also were recognized at the meeting

Kenny thanked Lakeshore staff for guiding the students to success. Encroachment bylaw

### fees to be reviewed

Port Colborne Downtown Business Improvement Area president Betty Konc asked city council if there was some way to waive or reduce the fee for encroachment application and

Encroachment applies to anything that is on or over the sidewalks around businesses, including signs She said the fee \$300 application and \$5D annual renewal fees are a deterrent to local businesses because of the high rates they already pay in other areas, such as hydro and parking.

Hugo Chesshire, the policy and

government relations manager with the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce, also brought concern of the growing cost of having a business in Ontario

He said in his research he wasn't able to find any fees as high as Port

The fees are based on a 2007 report. Councilors agreed a review of policy is hobboon

Dan Aquilina, the municipality's acting chief administrative officer, said he will get the report by the July 25

council meeting In the meantime, businesses are asked to continue to submit applications and cheques will be held until the fee is determined

### **Burning bylaw**

sparks confusion

At last week's city council meeting Port Colborne resident Edward Small spoke on behalf of himself and his wife about their concerns about the municipality's open-air burning Small said he doesn't understand

why he was given a citation for his bonfire, though he was in compliance with the bylaw and put the fire out when asked to do so by firefighters.
Port Colborne fire Chief Torn Cartwright said his department receives a complaint, it must respond. People are asked to extinguish the fire or the department will have to. A citation is always issued and if a

second complaint comes in within a 12-month period, the person will face a \$210 fine.

Small said he doesn't understand how that's fair since he was following the bylaw and asked that the fire department be given discretion about whether a citation is necessary. Cartwright said there are many

issues that come into play when discretion is given to the fire department. It's just easier to put the fire out and issue a citation. Ward 1 Coun. Dave Elliott agreed with Small that the bylaw is confusing.

You can have a fire, but once you get a complaint you can't have a fire. That's really weird," he said. Small said now he doesn't want to have another fire because he's at

risk of receiving the fine if someone complains again. He said the laws should be clear and firm, not with Deputy Mayor Bea Kenny said the

bylaw will stand.

# **GET THE LATEST**

INTERNATIONAL "SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL" SHOW COMES TO PORT COLBORNE



Calling all fans of 1950s Rock & Roll! Don't miss the incredible tribute show "Shake, Rattle & Roll!" coming live to the Roselawn Theatre in Port Colborne for special double performance, Saturday July 16th at 8pm and Sunday July 17th at 3pm. This fun-filled, audience interactive show combines a unique mix of comedy, banter and outstanding musical tributes, led by the amazing Bill Culp in the starring role as "Bill Haley", backed by the Memphis Cats Band. Culp is a highly regarded, international touring artist, who is returning to North America after sold out tours in Europe and Australia.

"Shake, Rattle & Roll!" also features the multi-talented Joe Passion and LoraLee McGuirl performing classic 1950s hits from Jerry Lee Lewis, Lesley Gore and Dion & the Belmonts.

Song highlights include "Rock Around The Clock", "Great Balls of Fire", "Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On", "It's My Party", "See You Later Alligator". and of course "Shake, Rattle & Roll" amongst the many audience favourites. Port Colborne will also see special guest Danny Fisher bringing Elvis Presley to the stage with "Hound Dog" and "All Shook Up"!

Tickets to see one of these incredible shows at the Roselawn Theatre in Port Colborne on Saturday July 16th at 8pm or Sunday July 17th at 3pm are on sale now, value-priced at only \$32 (all inclusive!) Visit the theatre box office located at 296 Fielden Avenue in Port Colborne or call the theatre box office at 905-834-7572. Get your tickets early to ensure the best seats for this rockin' 1950s show!





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# **LOCALNE**



### Shopping cart issues around Port

Ward 1 Coun. John Mayne brought up the issue of shopping carts once again. Considering the number of shopping carts all over Port Colborne, he asked if anything could be done to bring transit closer to grocery stores, such as Food Basics. The idea is to give residents the opportunity to take public transit as opposed to taking the shopping carts and walking across town to where they need to go.
Peter Senese, director of community

and corporate services, said the problem is Food Basics doesn't have the space for buses to safely go on the property and pick people up He said the bus route in the area

was made, however, to allow for people to board the bus at the stop sign by Food Basics even though there is no designated bus stop sign there.

Ward 2 Coun Angie Desmarais has concern about shopping carts in her area because no one comes to pick them up. She said it is out of control and city hall



Rasics add a fee or locking mechanism on their carts. Deputy Mayor Bea Kenny said she would send out that request during the

#### Municipal enforcement officer appointed

Summer student Ty Peressotti has been appointed as a bylaw enforcement officer for the City of Port Colborne. Acting chief administrative officer Dan Aquilina told city council last Monday night this is the first time in his tenure a summer student has been appointed, but it has been budgeted.

Peressotti will perform normal office duties and also will be able to write parking tickets during Canal Days. "It's nice that he can get some experience while going to school," Ward 1 Coun. Dave Elliot said

- Laura Barton, Postmedia Network

# **Call centre in hiring** mode adds 180 jobs

#### Postmerija Network

Sitel is adding 180 new jobs as a major contract continues to create demand for

more staff

When the full-time workers are brought in, the St. Catharines call centre will have a total roster of about 1.030

workere Sitel site director Glenn McCormack said that's the largest employment contingent they've had in recent years. The

centre reached its maximum about 15 years ago, with 1,400 employees. The new inbound-call positions will

provide technical support and customer service for a "major communications

"We're hiring as we speak," McCormack said last Tuesday. "And I'm hoping to have the 180 by

the second week in July." The pay is \$11.47 per hour, plus shift premiums and bonuses. "The client we have here ... in the tel-

ecommunications industry, has been with Sitel for 15 years," he said. "Over the last little bit we have really been doing very well for (them)," he said.

Continued on Page 19



# Seniors learn how to deal with elder abuse

### MICHELLE ALLENBERG

The Welland senior citizens advisory committee is looking out for Rose City's seniors, having hosted the event Beware ... Take care: Seniors Issues and Elder Abuse

June is Seniors Month and last Wednesday was World Elderly Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD), Last Wednesday's event held at Welland Community Wellness Complex was a chance to spread awareness about seniors issues, including abuse.

"We are more aware about senior abuse and other senior issues as a society," said Doug Rapelje, past-chair of the committee. "We need to make every effort to take preventative measures."

Regional Police, Alzheimer Society Niagara Region, Victim Services and Niagara Region Seniors' Community Programs spoke to a crowd of people at the complex. They touched on issues that included how to spot signs of abuse and what someone can do to help the person being

abused. "The number one sign we want to look for is a change - there are a lot of different ways someone can change," Pearl Robinson, from Victim Services, said. A change in their social habits, a change in their physical appearance, in the way they are living - their

financial circumstances." The four speakers said even if there is a small change that can be a red flag. People need to listen

Staff from Niagara to their gut feeling if they think something isn't right. the NRP, said he has seen elder abuse on the rice in recent years. He attributes this to the aging population, the move of more sen-

iors to Niagara and higher

unemployment.

support counsellor with the Paul Spiridi, who inves-Alzheimer society, agreed tigates criminal abuse with there are many reasons for this increase.

"You are also looking at more awareness, so it's not that it never existed. It is that people are more aware. not just for themselves, but also with other people.

Dion McParland, a family ferent generation, so every generation you will see a different change. Culturally. generational wise, they are a little bit more free to talk. to disclose, to be a little bit more public about our personal business," McParland

said. There are a variety of

"You are also seeing a dif-rent generation, so every offering support to families and individuals. Some of those organizations are the Alzheimer society at 905-697-3914 Victim Services at 905-688-4111 ext. 5084. and Niagara Gatekeeper Program at 905-684-0968.

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# Quarantine ordered for three ranch animals

#### **ALLAN BENNER** Postmedia Network

Niagara public health officials say they take no chances when it comes to possible rables infections

Although it's unlikely any of the animals at a Wainfleet animal rescue centre have rables. Niagara Region's manager of environmental health Bill Hunter said the owners of Ringtail Ranch were ordered to isolate three animais for 14 days as a precaution. That follows reports that

three people were injured by animals during a weekend open house there. A girl was scratched by a over the weekend."

lynx, a woman complained she was bitten by a mule and another woman said a squirrel monkey bit her, after more than 7,000 people attended an open house at the animal rescue facility - a far bigger crowd than organizers anticipated.

"Our jurisdiction is really for the protection of people from the potential of rables, and in that case we look at incidents that occurred and we determine whether we think they were provoked or out of the ordinary." Hunter said.

"And we then determine whether to apply prophylactics or whether we can go with a quarantine. In this case, we went with quarantine for the three cases that happened

Continued on Page 17





Joni Cook. who co-owns Ringtail Ranch with her husband Mark Drysdale. discusses isolating animals with inspectors from the SPCA and Niagara health department, on















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# **Canal Days lineup announced**

#### LAURA BARTON Postmedia Network

The Port Colborne Canal Days Marine Heritage Festival is back for its 38th year. Deputy Mayor Bea Kenny said the goal of the annual event is to offer "a vibrant, active and fun Niagara destination that ensures our residents and visitors enjoy what life in Port Colborne has to offer

This summer's Canal Days begin Friday, July 29, and continues until the holiday Monday with activities for all ages. From fun at H.H. Knoll Lakeview Park and the numerous activities along the canal itself, including, of course, ships, to live entertainment at the Market Square. there is a little bit of something for eve-

rybody. The tall ship, Empire Sandy, will dock in Port Colborne once again, joined by the Buffalo fireboat E.M. Cotter. Antique boats will be docked for viewing at the

Sugarloaf Marina. From the marina, visitors are encouraged to partake in guided lighthouse tours which are just a short boat ride

Cars for the 24th annual Canal Days Car Show will be parked at H.H. Knoll on Sunday, July 31, and the International

Kite Festival will be flying high the day "If you have not taken the opportunity to see the kite show, it is really spectacu-

lar," Kenny said. The Market Square Concert Series this year features Finger 11 with Jeff Martin and 97.7 HTZ-FM Rock Search winner

Nathan McNevin and The Silence Factory on Friday. "Now, I did not know who that was," Kenny said with a laugh. "I had to ask my

She said Saturday's features were more her generation with David Wilcox and

Kim Mitchell. Monday afternoon is an opportunity to hear The Beatles tribute band The Caverners with Tim E. Hendry, who is the

2013 King of the World Elvis Tribute Artist World Champion. There will also be a plethora of local

talent performing at the Scotiabank Patio on West Street. There are some really great

Port Colborne kids there, too, Kenny said. She went on to say Canal Days isn't just about tourism, but about

the city's economy and retail sec-"Overall showcasing the strength of the City of Port Colborne," she said.

Kenny was quick to mention how much work goes into making Canal Days and all of the events over the summer successful. She not only thanked the sponsors for the event, but also those who do

all the ground work. "We could not do this at all, not at all, without our volunteers.

Annually, more than 400,000

people attend Canal Days from near and far which has an economic impact of roughly \$4 million from non-residents and event

The complete schedule is posted on the city's website listed under events. www.portcolborne.

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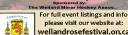
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# **LOCALNEWS**

# 'Very small' chance of rabies but public health wants to be sure

#### From Page 11

Ringtail Ranch and Rescue owners Joni Cook and Mark Drysdale said all the ani-

mals on their Garringer Road property are inoculated against rabies. Nevertheless, they were ordered to keep the three animals quarantined from

other animals and people for two weeks. "If they're still healthy at the end of that time, we know they weren't rabid. The

likelihood of it is very small, because we have been advised that they have been vaccinated against rables. But considering the seriousness of rables, we applied the quarantine anyway," Hunter said, Cook said the quarantine is "normal

procedure," and they have already isolated the animals.

She said public health is "being very sensible and reasonable about it." "They're not asking for anything unu-

sual," she added. Although concerns were identified about the enclosure for some of the animals, Hunter said that falls outside the

health department's jurisdiction. "We might make referrals to other agencies if there is repeat hiting by the same animal or situations where we feel quarantine can't be properly or safely done. Then we would refer them to (the SPCA)." Hunter said.

"If there are other issues, we might make referrals to the local municipality and so on. But in this case, we're familiar with this one, as are our colleagues in other agencies."

after the girl was scratched by the lynx, the bites were reported to be minor. Nevertheless, Hunter said, they could

Although an ambulance was dispatched

not be certain the bites hadn't punctured

"If we could be satisfied that the skin wasn't broken, then there wouldn't be the potential for the transmission of rabies in the unlikely event that they had it in the first place," he said.

"We were unable to completely satisfy ourselves that was the case, so we make the assumption it could have happened and act accordingly, which in this case

meant ordering the quarantine." Meanwhile, Cook said Ringtail Ranch has received a lot of support from the

community since the open houses. "Obviously, you can't please everyone all the time, but most of our visitors are wonderful people who support us and

understand the issues that we're going through," she said. "I appreciate each and every one of

them. They're really backing us here, and a lot of people have come forward and sent us some wonderful e-mails and messages on Facebook."

Although there has also been som concern the popular open houses held at Ringtail Ranch have been cancelled. Cook said organizers are discussing ways

to run them more smoothly in the future. "We're having a meeting this week sometime with all of our volunteers and we're going to hounce things off of them and see what they think," she said.

"We have some ideas about what we can do to make things run a little smoother if we do go back to the open

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From Page 9 Brian York, the City of "This client ... would like St. Catharines' manager of economic development, called Sitel "a global leader in outsourced customer experience.

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# **LOCALNEWS**

# Fund invests more than \$200K in two Niagara breweries

### DON FRASER

Postmedia Network Niagara Oast House Brewers has come a long way since its founding three years ago. their heady fortunes of the province's craft beer industry. "One of the problem's we've been having since Day 1 is meeting our demand,

said Cian MacNeill, principal owner and president of Oast House in Niagara-on-the-Lake, "And the technology that allows us package flexibility that now allows you to

"We only had tall 750-millilitre bottles - and now we've

gone into tall boy cans, which the LCBO likes you to come

in with, based on their popular mix-and-match program," MacNeill said MacNeill's brewery got some help, with a news release last Friday confirming a fed-

ment of \$207,100 to two Niagara breweries to help them expand their operations.

Continued on next page



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# Fund invests more than \$200K in two Niagara breweries

From previous page
Brimstone Brewery Company in Ridgeway will be receiving \$115,700 and \$91.393 has been earmarked to Niagara Oast House Brewers.

A release from St. Catharines MPP Jim. Bradley, announcing the local funding, notes it coincides with Ontario Craft Beer from June 10-19, with provincial craft

beers to be featured at special events. The Niagara investments are also part of a \$1.6-million investment through Growing Forward 2 into 42 projects at 20

craft breweries For Oast House, it's allowed building renovations, the purchasing and installation of a fermenter with a keg filler and 40, 30-litre kegs, a malt silo and a new

brewhouse system. It will also help the brewery equip a quality control and product-develop-

ment lab, and design a canning line. "That's the biggest thing with this, it's allowing us to grow," MacNeill said of his brewery that opened November, 2012, and now employs 24 full-time and 40

seasonal workers. Meanwhile, Brimstone got funding under Growing Forward to complete training on the master brewer program. buy new equipment to increase production and on-site tap room renova-

It has also let the brewery buy a walkin cooler to accommodate the boosted

supply of a new brewing system.

\*This has enabled us to expand capacity and reach to other markets and expand a bit further," said brewery co-owner Jason Pizzicarola, of the 10-employee Brimstone, founded in 2012. "From Niagara to Toronto and the Kitchener-Waterloo area

is where we're focusing." Bradley describes the point of the program as serving "to enhance and promote and enhance a craft beer industry, which is rapidly growing in the province in popularity and sales."



Cian MacNeil, principal owner of Oast House Brewers with some of the additions to the Niagara-on-the-Lake location that has benefited from provincial and federal investment in the operations.

"We're trying to encourage this particular industry so financial assistance is being provided as it is in other sectors.

This is helping them out to become very productive," Bradley said, adding the craft beer sector is becoming "popular not only

with locals, but people who visit."
"Of course this is very good for jobs, right across the province and in Niagara.







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# **LOCALNEWS**



Ten students at St. Gabriel Lalemant Catholic School in Niagara Falls came in close proximity to a bat which has tested positive for rabies.

# **Schoolyard bat tests** positive for rabies

The region's Public Health department phoned him the next day to say the bat tested positive for rabies, and "highly recommended" the children close to it get \*The bat was infected, and it could be

spread through saliva," Massi says. "If any of (the kids) had an open cut or got sprayed in the eye, I guess it's communicable." Massi says five children were originally playing tag. During the commotion, five more kids gathered around the tree. None were hitten

Massi was told by the Humane Society the bat was likely chased by a predator the night before and "was a bit diso-"It was following its natural instinct,

which is to sleep during the day. It was just sleeping low on the tree." The bat is the fifth confirmed case of rabies in Niagara this year. The other four were all raccoons in West Lincoln between March 2 and June 15.

Massi is relieved the bat was spotted before it could fly off and cause other nrobleme

"What if we didn't know and the hat flew away, and someone did indeed get infected? Then we have a life that's in

Chris Gaspar, the region's Manager of Environmental Health, says Niagara averages between 15 to 30 incidents per year of people coming into contact with

Niagara Falls resident Denise Thomp son says her daughter was one of the students close to the bat last week, and received her first rabies vaccination last

"The concern is that the (bat's) saliva may have gotten into her eyes because she was in close proximity," she says. 'It's scary when you start reading up on rabies, because once they start showing symptoms it's too late to start any treat ment, and it's fatal' Thompson adds her daughter didn't

even mention the incident when she came home from school "I had to ask her about it. She told me she thought it was a bird."

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